



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
**MENTAL HEALTH AND
SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES**

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



**Marin County Mental Health and Substance Use Services
Innovation Plan
Growing Roots: The Young Adults Services Project**

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Core Purpose:

This Plan aims to reduce disparities in access to culturally competent behavioral health services for TAY from un/underserved populations (i.e.: race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, geographic isolation, experiencing complex conditions) who are at risk for or experiencing a mental illness by building on the strengths of the informal system of care.

Why:

TAY at risk for or experiencing mental illness are less likely to engage in formal mental health services than other age groups. At the same time, an individual's initial episode of severe mental illness usually occurs in the late teens or early twenties, suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth ages 15-24, and youth ages 15 to 21 have the highest prevalence of co-occurring substance use and mental disorders.

Marin County Penetration Rates from DHCS report (FY2014-15)

White	11%
Hispanic	2.5%
African-American	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.5%
Native American	15.5%
Other	9%

Marin County Penetration Rate for TAY calculated from existing data

5942 Medi-Cal beneficiaries ages 16-25 years old in Sept 2015	468 clients ages 16-25 years old in FY14-15	Penetration Rate: 8%
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Marin MHSUS recognizes that the existing system of care does not engage TAY from un/underserved populations who are at risk for or experiencing mental illness at the rate we need to. While there has been progress in that direction since implementing the MHSA, providers and other stakeholders recognize a need for a new approach. Based on stakeholder input, we propose learning how to partner with un/underserved TAY and people in the community who effectively engage them in order to develop a system of care that appropriately serves un/underserved TAY.

MHSA requires us to include stakeholders in a meaningful way in policy, program planning and implementation, monitoring, quality improvement, evaluation, and budget allocations. This INN Plan aims at finding a new approach to engaging TAY and other appropriate stakeholders in each of those areas. In conducting the most recent MHSA Three Year Planning Process, extra effort was made to include all populations, and yet TAY participation was only 3%. To support the success of this INN Plan we must

start with a new approach to conducting the needs assessment and working forward from there.

How:

By engaging un/underserved TAY who are at-risk for mental illness or experiencing mental illness in a process to identify what their needs are and what strategies for engaging them are working, as well as to design and guide the implementation of services that make sense to them. This includes a few components:

- A TAY Advisory Council will be initiated at the start of the INN Plan by recruiting a small but diverse group of TAY from un/underserved communities. The Ethnic Services Manager (ESM) will do targeted outreach to enlist the initial members. The ESM has strong connections in the community due to his work in mental health, probation, community initiatives and his experience as a foster parent. The initial members will participate in the review panels for the Facilitator, Evaluator, and participating informal organizations – with their input directly advising the Division Director regarding contracting decisions.
- MHSUS will ensure that the participating informal organizations represent the un/underserved TAY in Marin, including Latino, Vietnamese, Black, LGBTQ, and geographically isolated areas. Extensive outreach has already been conducted to potential applicants, including workshops on how to respond to an RFP. Technical Assistance will be provided to applicants through a contractor to assist them with applying. And MarinLink has agreed to provide fiscal sponsorship for all grantees who do not already have a legal structure the County can contract with. These organizations will then help us complete the TAY Advisory Council membership, ensuring all appropriate representation.
- Participatory evaluation process: An evaluator will be contracted for the entire INN plan, with the TAY Advisory Council participating in the hiring process. The evaluator will work with the TAY Advisory Council to develop and implement the evaluation plan. The evaluation will focus on:
 - **Outcomes:** Do an increased number of TAY from un/underserved populations who are at-risk or experiencing mental illness receive behavioral health services? What are the behavioral health related outcomes for TAY receiving services (outreach, engagement, prevention, community integration) from informal providers?
 - **Process:** Do the TAY involved in the process represent the target population? Does participation in the TAY Advisory Council increase TAY participation in stakeholder processes, including Mental Health Board and MHSA Advisory Committee? Are informal providers more able to identify and link TAY who need further services? Is the formal system of care more able to integrate the expertise of TAY and informal providers into their services and procedures?
 - **Learning:** What about the TAY Advisory Council enabled TAY participation in the stakeholder process? What about the process enabled informal providers to contribute their expertise to the system of care? In the end, what is done differently that supports a better system of care for TAY? What of these learnings is replicable – for TAY or other parts of the system of care?
- Phase 1: Past County needs assessment efforts have had very low participation by TAY, and therefore learning more effective approaches is necessary. This Needs Assessment will enlist the help of people in the community who effectively engage TAY, as well as TAY themselves, in designing and conducting the Needs Assessment. The Facilitator and Evaluator will work directly with the TAY Advisory Council to implement their ideas and the TAY will present the results.